The Net-Results’ Master’s Series started as an idea to summarize the success components of a Revenue Performance Management strategy. It has developed into a learning community. But at its core, the Master’s Series is about you. The creative class of people that are plugged into what’s new and are inspired by innovative ideas. Your quest for new ideas, ingenious implementations, and the latest marketing trends inspires us to create this community. Doing your part to make things happen today must involve Lead Scoring.

Today’s topic, **Lead Scoring**, has a direct and significant impact on the revenue performance management cycle.
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PART ONE: What is Lead Scoring?

Lead Scoring is a methodology and practice of assigning a numerical score, or points, to your organization’s prospects and customers. Points are defined ideally by both your Marketing and Sales staff and through best practices. The attributes represent activities or actions associated with serious attraction and engagement to your products or services. Prospects with a higher Lead Score, indicate that a target is active in the buying process and ready to engage with sales.

Lead Generation and Marketing Automation tools automate and manage the process of Lead Scoring using several types of experiential input including explicit and implicit information. Explicit scoring information such as industry, company size or job title is provided from multiple data sources, including your CRM or sales data sheets. Implicit scoring information is the job of your Marketing Automation tool, which monitors when, where and how often prospects visit your site, download white papers and/or click through an email campaign.
PART TWO: Why is Lead Scoring Important to the Sales Process?

“80% of the leads generated through business activities get dropped, lost or forgotten.”
Sirius Decisions

“Over a two year period, 85% of leads disqualified by traditional sales activities will still purchase from you or your competitor.”
Sirius Decisions

Businesses can and should spend an extraordinary amount of time and effort focused on marketing, sales and revenue. Brand awareness and the systems and processes that support revenue efforts are the lifeblood of the business. That is why it is so important to define, manage and optimize the technology efforts that support that process. Marketing Automation tools can manage any prospect triggers you define, but poorly crafted rules can lead to lost opportunity. Effective Lead Scoring addresses not only the leads collected through information gathering and activity-based monitoring programs, but applies systematic criteria to shepherd “disqualified” leads through a nurturing process designed to educate, inspire and motivate purchasing behavior.
PART THREE: Why do I Need to Understand Lead Scoring?

Lead Scoring is like a super-amplified set of eyes and ears focused on your most promising leads. Lead Scoring translates your techniques for discovering your prospect’s needs into a measurable score. An actionable score helps you suggest appropriate information, products or services to meet a prospect’s needs. Just as active listening functions to confirm what you think the customer has indicated, by observing their verbal and nonverbal cues, an appropriately tuned Marketing Automation Platform (MAP) applies those same Lead Scoring techniques to your prospects consistently 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

Lead Scoring is an important aspect of Marketing Automation success. Your role in defining Lead Scores represents indigenous knowledge, information only learned from real-life experience, that can be effectively applied to this technology. Failure to define your Lead Scoring system properly wastes time, unnecessarily disqualifies leads, confounds prospects, and fails to establish the competitive advantage inherent in the true synergy of sales and marketing data working together.
PART FOUR: Why Does my Business Need Lead Scoring?

MAPs represent a significant investment of time, money and effort for an organization and its resources. Lead Scoring is a pivotal component in an effective revenue growth process. Marketing Automation tools delve into the complex role that sales and marketing techniques play in improving close rates and improving revenue.

The choice to implement Marketing Automation represents the combination of a strategic direction for an organization’s revenue management initiatives, with the design and implementation of the appropriate organizational structures, tools, and processes to execute the strategy. Marketing Automation captures, stores, organizes and disseminates marketing and sales information, within the appropriate context to enable the experiential application of Lead Scoring, which in turn builds relationships, and guides leads to sales-ready status.
PART FIVE:
Steps to Define Lead Scoring

THE HIGH LEVEL ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:
1. Define the strategy  2. Design the path  3. Capture key information  4. Implement the plan  5. Manage the Solution

While it took Rocky Balboa 72 steps to rise to his challenge, defining an effective Lead Scoring approach is less arduous but no less gratifying. Effective Lead Scoring relies on experiential information, tacit expertise and a common lexicon. While it may seem like going straight to the Lead Scoring exercise is the most prudent activity, an effective system can’t be defined without understanding its interdependencies. And Lead Scoring depends on people, processes and the Marketing Automation technology for its success. In the following section, we explain the five foundational steps your company can take to set-up an effective Lead Scoring strategy.
1. Define the Strategy

Gain an understanding of the objectives and identify and understand the nature and purpose of the interactions between Marketing and Sales with the system and its actions.

a. Examine what makes a quality lead or ideal prospect
b. Examine how sales and marketing can collaborate on lead scoring
c. Examine how the departments will follow-up once the system is in place
2. Design the Path

Including the people, processes, and technology that comprise the solution. Identify the necessary roles and responsibilities to implement and support the solution.

a. Consider lead routing rules for people or departments
b. Consider existing assets, material, white papers, content
c. Consider schedules, availability and timing
d. Consider response times for sales to qualified prospects
3. Capture Key Information

Inputs:
- Marketing
- Sales

Collect key inputs from Marketing, Sales, Executive Management, Sales Managers and Field Reps.

a. Define pertinent contact information: first name, last name, valid email, job title, industry
b. Define activity criteria: specific pages viewed, PDFs read, videos watched, whitepapers downloaded, etc
c. Define engagement criteria: actions to take when prospect responds to web forms, makes a blog comment or participates in a webinar
d. Define the scores you want to assign to behaviors.
e. Define Service Level criteria with sales to ensure that qualified prospects are contacted within company accepted timeframes
f. Define the assets, material, letters or that prospects will receive, or define an approach for collecting that material
Now that you have gathered information, built consensus, and understand what prospect behaviors are important, it's time to implement.

a. Test your Lead Scoring plan with your MAP vendor
b. Confirm the test ran as predicted
c. Announce the go live date to your team
d. Schedule and run your first campaign
5. Manage the Solution

Revisit the strategy, activities and Lead Scoring module regularly.

a. Review campaign results every 30-45 days
b. Review recently closed business and website analytics to look for key indicators of success
c. Restructure Lead Scoring criteria with new any success indicators
d. Continue to build new assets, material, white papers and content
PART SIX:
A Good Place to Start

When you begin to consider the impact Lead Scoring and Marketing Automation can have on your business, it’s easy to get overwhelmed. There’s no need for that. Begin your Lead Scoring exercise by gathering stakeholders from Sales and Marketing and then begin the conversation about what qualities define a qualified lead.

Then write several simple easy to read sentences, such as:

- **A good prospect is one that requests a trial and provides first name, last name, company name, and email information.**
- **A good prospect is one that accesses our site from a search of our SEO keywords.**
- **A prospect that needs nurturing is one that downloads our whitepaper but has not returned to the site in the past month.**
Refine your examples through discussion, feedback, and conversations. This helps ensure that you’ve clearly defined what makes a good lead, and what defines a prospect that needs more nurturing.

A good prospect is one that requests a trial and provides contact information.

- and job title is a decision maker
- and industry is our target
- has viewed our pricing page in the last 7 days
- has viewed our product page for more than 30 seconds
This sentence and its scoring criteria implies that the prospect has interest, plans to make a purchasing decision, and is ready to speak with sales.

A prospect that needs nurturing is one that downloads our whitepaper.

- and arrived by keyword search
- has not viewed our pricing page in the last 7 days
- has viewed our product page for more than 30 seconds
- has visited the site multiple times in the last month

This sentence and its scoring criteria recognizes that the prospect has knowledge of your brand, may have interest in products and pricing, but needs more information to move along the sales path.
PART SEVEN: 
Lead Scoring Example

Once you’ve created your Lead Scoring examples, you can craft your rules within your tool. Here’s how the information interacts in a Marketing Automation system.

Your Marketing Automation tool can support your sales and marketing efforts by identifying, capturing, evaluating and qualifying prospect information that would otherwise be lost. It can be a powerful tool in your revenue generating arsenal. Lead Scoring is a valuable component of that strategy.
Glossary

**Activity Score**— information that is specific to a prospect’s page views or site access source that is numerically weighted to produce a contact event or system action.

**Contact Score**— information that is specific to the prospect’s name, email address, industry, and revenue that is numerical weighted to produce a contact event or system action.

**Engagement Score**— information that is specific to the prospect’s interaction with forms, email marketing or web events that is numerically weighted to produce a contact event or system action.

**Explicit Information**— lead scoring information given by the prospect or gathered from a CRM.

**Implicit Information**— lead scoring information gathered by observing the prospect.

**Lead Scoring**— is a methodology of assigning a numerical score, or points, to prospects.

**Nurturing**— the process of keeping in meaningful and consistent communication with quality prospects.

**Qualified Lead**— prospect that meets the customer profile, is a decision maker, has a need, plans to make a purchase in the near term and is ready to speak with sales.